إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

# The Review of Religions

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# *IF . .*

## YOU WANT TO KNOW

What Islam Stands for, what is its message for humanity, how does it seek to raise man from the lowest depths of degradation to the highest pinnacles of glory—economically, morally and spiritually

*READ*

## AHMADIYYAT OR THE TRUE ISLAM

BY

## Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad

HEAD OF THE AHMADIYYA COMMUNITY AND THE GREATEST LIVING AUTHORITY ON ISLAM

*The book deals in a simple and lucid manner, briefly but fully and completely, with all the different aspects of the teachings of Islam.*

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بسم اللہ الرحمن الرحیم

نحمدہ ونصلی علی رسولہ الکریم

In the name of Allah, the most Beneficent and the most Merciful
We praise Him and invoke His blessings upon
His exalted Prophet.

*"A prophet came unto the world and the world accepted him not, but God shall accept him and establish his truth with mighty signs."*

## Islamic conception of Retaliation (Qisas)

*Versus*

## Gandhi's Principle of Ahinsa

*By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Head of the Ahmadia Community, Qadian.*

[The fast which Mr. Gandhi recently kept has again brought him into prominence and caused his principle of Ahinsa to be discussed. The following article brings to our view the unreality of the comparison that is sometimes drawn between Ahinsa and Qisas and shows how wide apart the two principles are in method and purpose and how when their essential qualities are brought into comparison the former sinks in the scale of moral justification.—*Ed. R. R.*]

Before, however, I proceed to explain the teaching laid down by Islam in regard to retaliation—a teaching which has moulded the thought and actions of the Muslims into their particular shape and which, for over a thousand years, has exerted such a powerful influence over them which though by reason of the present-day Muslims' general ignorance and apathy in regard to their religion has rather worn off, is nevertheless still potential enough to work a transformation among them—I will first briefly discuss as to what constitutes retaliation.

Retaliation, as I conceive it, is a natural instinct and like all other natural instincts which serve some useful purpose, it is essential for the protection and preservation of human race. In the daily affairs of life, there frequently arise circumstances when, disregarding the dictates of the native virtue and goodness in him, man commits encroachments upon the rights of others. Under such circumstances the persons wronged or his friends and relatives are forced to adopt counteracting measures against the aggressor. These measures sometimes take the form of a gentle remonstrance and friendly dissuasion and a kind treatment and sometimes that of active resistance. In their latter form they are called retaliation.

Natural impulses, when they over-step their natural and proper limits and are swayed by the passions of the moment and by the influences of the surrounding conditions are like a rough, uncut stone, but when they are brought under the control and direction of reason and sound judgment, they become transformed into moral qualities. They are then like a beautiful diamond which is well polished and refined of all impurities and whose facets are all so perfectly and so exquisitely cut, that it becomes not only a fascinating object to look upon but also invested with a bright scintillating light.

It is in its refined and cultured state governed by reason, such as the above, that we take the sentiment of retaliation.

On the question of retaliation, different views are held. There are some who regard retaliation to be lawful only in its indirect form, as social boycott as regards individuals, and the flouting and breaking of civil laws when dealing with the Government. Beyond this they hold retaliation to be unlawful. There are others who regard retaliation as lawful in all its different forms, such as, beating, imprisoning and killing. There is a third class of people who are totally opposed to retaliation in any shape or form whatever.

But this last view-point may well be left out of consideration, as it is manifestly opposed to nature itself, for, as I have stated

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above, retaliation is a natural sentiment which can be governed by, and brought under the control of, rules and principles, but cannot be ignored and suppressed outright.

Those who have invented this novel form of indirect retaliation, or " non-violence," as they love to call it, affect to believe that it is no retaliation at all, but only a form of submission to oppression in which the oppressed instead of fighting and combating the oppression of the oppressor willingly bears it. This point is being so much reiterated and emphasized, that it has begun to be universally accepted as true, so much so that some of the Christian clergymen have actually written books in which they have unhesitatingly and unreservedly admitted that Mr. Gandhi who, according to them, is the founder of this principle, and the originator of this doctrine, has in reality given a practical shape to the teaching about toleration and forgiveness of Jesus Christ. But every intelligent person knows that this is far from being the case. The Christian doctrine of toleration and Mr. Gandhi's principle of so-called " non-violence " are as widely apart as are the two poles from each other. The teaching of Jesus Christ is : Give to your enemy what he wants to take from you, while Mr. Gandhi tells you how, without actively fighting and resisting your enemy, you can recover what you have lost to him. The central point which the Prophet of Nazareth wants to inculcate is that as human nature is essentially good, if you set before your enemy an example of toleration and forgiveness of a very high character it will cause his native goodness to come into play and exhort him to do good to you.

On the other hand, Mr. Gandhi's point of view is : if your opponent makes a demand from you which he is not justified to make, do not actively oppose him (by beating him or resorting to any other device of identical nature) but do not let him have what he demands and wishes to take and try to frustrate his design. Personally I hold both these principles to be defective, but, choosing between the two, the Christian doctrine is by far superior to Mr. Gandhi's principle. The Christian doctrine teaches you to let, by your forbearance and

toleration, the good that is latent in you take a tangible form while Mr. Gandhi teaches to stay the hand of the oppressor by passive resistance. The one teaches you to commit your affairs to the keeping of God, the other exhorts you to oppose and fight the aggressor in a manner that, however aggressive in your act of opposition you yourself may become, you should continue to be regarded as oppressed and aggrieved. Consistent with the dictates and tenets of his religion a follower of Jesus Christ may, by his attitude, encourage others to acts of aggression against himself but under no circumstances can he sin against them nor can he compel others to do so. But a follower of Mr. Gandhi not only is capable of oppressing others himself but is calculated to incite other people to do the same. In view of this vast and glaring difference between these two view-points it is inconsistent with reason and common-sense to regard them as similar, and I am astonished to see that there are some clergymen who have the audacity to declare them to be identical and thus insult their great and noble Master.

The truth is that Mr. Gandhi's doctrine does not, in any way, represent voluntary submission to aggression by others, but is only an indirect form of retaliation. And excepting difference in forms, direct and indirect, retaliation are the same. Both serve the same purpose, namely to compel another person to yield to your will. Whichever of the two forms you choose, it will be good or bad according to the occasion and according to your attitude being just or unjust. If justly and lawfully you compel a person to do what you want him to do, this act of retaliation on your part, whether done directly or indirectly, will be justified.

If, however, you compel him to do a certain thing in an unjust and unlawful manner, this act of retaliation will be unjustified, whatever form or guise it may take. If, for instance, living under a properly and lawfully constituted government you retaliate against a thief who has stolen your property, by stealing his property in return, you will be acting wrongly even if the goods you have stolen happen to be of the same or even of less value than those you have lost. Thus an indirect

retaliation, otherwise called ' boycott ' or ' civil disobedience, cannot always be regarded and admired as a praiseworthy and patriotic service of the country any more than a direct form of retaliation ; using force against force, is necessarily to be condemned as a sin and a reprehensible act. There is no difference whatever in killing a person by giving him poison and causing his death by not allowing him to drink water. Similarly, there is no difference between beating a person to death with a stick and starving him to death by preventing him from going to his daily work, or in the case of a shop-keeper, to picket his shop and keep away customers from buying from him and setting fire to his stock of goods.

It may be objected here that in time of war we resort to all sorts of means and methods, direct or indirect, to injure the interests of our enemies, such as preventing articles of food from reaching their countries and in no code of moral or political laws such an act is regarded as unlawful or condemnable. But the analogy does not hold good in the present case. In time of war it is quite permissible and justifiable to kill our enemies. If Civil Disobedience is also resorted to—because we are believed to be in a state of war with the Government—then murdering, plundering, pillaging should also be regarded as lawful and justifiable, because in a state of war all these methods are not only allowed but are actually practised. The fact is, that we declare war against a nation only when we are convinced that our enemy is not prepared to listen to reason and arguments and is bent upon forcing his will upon us. For physical force on the part of our enemy we are compelled to use similar force against him. When at war a nation uses all means in its power, direct or indirect, with which it can defeat its enemy and achieve victory over him. Moreover, when a nation considers itself at war with another nation it does not object to the means and methods used by it to defeat and annihilate the belligerent party.

To decide this question of the lawfulness or otherwise of the means used by two parties which are at war with each other, let us take the case of India. If India at present is really

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at war with the British Government there is no reason why the country should be prevented from using force and resorting to the direct method of retaliation and when the Government in return should have recourse to beating, prosecuting and imprisoning the civil resisters and confiscating their properties, it should be criticized and condemned and a loud hue and cry should be raised against it. And if the country is not in a state of war with the Government, then why the indirect method of retaliation should be employed in preference to the direct method when the use of both these means against a properly and lawfully constituted authority are equally unjustified and unlawful. The purpose and the result of employing both these methods is to injure the interests of other people and to put them to hardships and this is not permissible and lawful in time of peace.

It is equally futile and unreasonable to contend that though we are engaged in a war with the Government but as we have employed only indirect method of retaliation in our warfare, the Government should also remain passive and refrain from making arrests. Every party when engaged in war is at perfect liberty and is quite justified to use any means in its power to achieve its purpose. If one side for lack of guns is forced to fight its battles with swords there is no reason why the other party should not use its guns and fight with swords only.

If one side considers its entry into the territory of the belligerent party through a certain pass, it cannot reasonably expect the other side to confine its attack to the same pass. Every side is free to employ what means, it thinks, serves its purpose best.

In short no blame attaches to the Government in whatever it does and whatever means it employs to defeat and suppress the Gandhi movement as long as the Government is not acknowledged to be the lawfully constituted authority and Mr. Gandhi and the Congressmen are not admitted to be the subjects of the Government. And if they should be regarded as the subjects of the Government and it should be accepted as

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*Some members of the Ahmadiyya Community of Cairo. The turbaned gentleman in the centre of the picture is Maulvi Abul-Ata Jullundhari, our Missionary to the Near East.*

lawfully constituted, it shall have to be admitted as well, that the methods which Mr. Gandhi and the Congress are making use of, are in reality a form of retaliation and by whatever beautiful names they may be called they are as unlawful and reprehensible as the other form—direct retaliation.

The truth is, that the whole trouble in the country is due to a lack of comprehension of the true definition of retaliation and its limits. In some future article I shall try to define what, according to Islam, retaliation is and what are its limits and scope ; and shall explain what remedy Islam prescribes and what methods it suggests if the oppressed and the aggrieved fails, in view of these limits, to have his wrongs righted and grievances redressed.

Mr. Gandhi's Non-co-operation and Civil Dirobedience movement is nothing but a form of retaliation lawful only under conditions of war ; if retaliation against the constituted government be assumed to be a theoretically rightful thing to do, then, all such acts of active hostility as killing, shooting and pillaging, which are the concomitants of war, shall have to be admitted as being equally lawful. But as, in view of the fact that no state of warfare exists, the policy of Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience is divested of all justification the government has every right to arrest the civil resisters and to use such other physical force against them as may appear to it to be called-for by the circumstances.

In this article I propose to define as to what, according to Islam, constitutes retaliation, and what are the occasions on which it is lawful to resort thereto.

Retaliation means a measure or measures adopted with the object of counteracting any unfair, improper, or illegal action of another and of destroying his power to work such a harm in future. The Arabic word for retaliation is *intiqam* which is a derivative from *naqam* which signifies, to *dislike* or *to disapprove of*. *Intiqam* in Islamic terminology, therefore, means to requite injury to another for something done by him which you disapprove of. This definition of retaliation is one

which is perfectly corroborated by human reason. According to it, all that you do with intent to harm another man, whether it affects him directly or indirectly, falls under the category of retaliation.

Having defined retaliation, I will now proceed to describe the occasions on which Islam has allowed its use. To begin with, Islam has restricted retaliation only to cases where its use is calculated to produce a good and constructive result, and has totally prohibited it where it will not conduce to that end, and where it is indulged in, merely to gratify a lust for vengeance. There are three cases in which retaliation is permissible. The first case arises, when one government goes to war with another. In this case, in proportion to the gravity of the provocation which has led to hostilities, a country will be justified in adopting both direct and indirect methods of warfare against its enemy. God says in the Holy Quran : "You may retaliate against your enemy to the same extent to which he aggresses against you." Thus, besides using the sword, a belligerent country can, with perfect justification, use economic weapons against its enemy. The Holy Prophet, in his defensive wars with those who aggressed against the Muslims, made use of both these kinds of weapons.

The second case is where a government acts tyrannically towards its subjects. In such an eventuality, Islam enjoins the subject people to bear the evil patiently as far as possible and try to get their grievances redressed by constitutional methods. If these should prove unavailing and matters come to a head, they should emigrate from their country and settle elsewhere. If, however, the government even prevents them from peacefully evacuating the country, they are then allowed to withdraw their allegiance from that government and stoutly resist their oppressors by every means in their power and throw off their yoke.

The third case is where one individual has got a grievance against another individual or where one class or community of people have got a grievance against another class or community in the same country and under the same government. In this

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connection, Islam lays down that if the grievance in question is one which relates to some cognizable offence under the laws of the country, then legal redress should be sought for it. Under a settled and ordered government, Islam has prohibited the law being taken into one's own hands, as is illustrated by a reply of the Holy Prophet which he made on a certain occasion. Asked whether in the case of a man caught red-handed in a crime, one could punish the offender oneself, the Prophet of God replied in the negative, and said that in every case the matter must always be referred to the proper authorities who alone have a right to deal with it.

If, however, owing to certain reasons, one is unable or is disinclined to take a legal action in the matter, one can bring the offender to book by taking such private steps against him as do not involve any infringement of the law. Or where, in an individual case or in the case of a community, the hostility manifested by the opposite side does not involve open violence but is expressed in the form of a social boycott or in some other similar way, and if all pacific means have failed to settle the matter then the person or the community wronged may appropriately retaliate by adopting the same weapon in return. The Holy Prophet acted similarly on one occasion when the Muslims were boycotted by the Meccans. But in making such retaliation no vindictive or aggressive spirit should be displayed, and it should be carried out strictly in self-defence. On the occasion referred to above, the Holy Prophet of Islam, despite the fact that the Meccans were still persecuting the Muslims in a variety of ways, discontinued his boycott as soon as the Meccans had given up theirs. Furthermore, in cases where Islam has permitted retaliation, it has subjected it to a number of restrictions For example, in ragard to free nations, where matters proceed to open hostilities, Islam has imposed these conditions : (1) The fighting should be directed only against the combatants and no harm should be done to the aged, the sick and the infirm, the ecclesiastics and to women and children, except where any of them actually participates in the struggle; (2) when the aggressor that provoked the war, repenting of his aggression sincerely sues for peace, it should be granted to him ;

(3) during the course of the war, no mutilation of the enemy's dead should be indulged in; (4) the war or the legal action or the social boycott, as the case may be, should be restricted only to the enemy or to the country that has actually provoked you. No harm should be done to his or its friends or connections. This is a general condition which holds good in all cases of retaliation. For instance, if a husband and a wife fall out and separate from each other, it would be unlawful for any of them to seek to harm the other by ill-treating the child. There are, however, some exceptional cases in which the punishment of the offender will naturally affect his relatives, and as such it is excusable. For instance, when a criminal is hanged his bereaved wife and children are bound to suffer from his punishment.

These are some of the cases in which Islam has allowed retaliation, and every just and reasonable person will admit that these are legitimate cases on which the very peace and prosperity and well-being of the society rest.

Many people think that greater the retaliation the less is the cruelty involved. This, however, is wrong. Students of psychology know that pity and cruely are impulses which, under different circumstances, exercise different influences upon the human mind. To instil and cultivate feelings of pity or fear in a mind a definite kind of mental condition is required. Unless those conditions are provided the above feelings will not take root in the mental soil. This is a fact to which the Islamic teachings have paid a due measure of regard. Excessive fear becomes ineffective while over-confidence produces supine indolence. Among a host of its other mistakes, it is in respect of this fact that the Congress movement has made its most eggregious blunder. By trying to strike too much terror into the hearts of the British merchants it has made them desperate and driven them to adopt retaliatory measure, thereby rendering its own non-co-operation movement ineffectual.

But this is by the way. To return to the subject; Islam has put many restrictions on the use of retaliation. In addition to those I have already mentioned above, Islam disallows retaliation

where its exercise involves infringement of the law. it is for this reason that the present Civil Disobedience movement is opposed to the Islamic teachings. A little unbiassed consideration of the question will show, that to break the civil laws by picketing the foreign cloth shops and by boycotting cloth of foreign manufacture is to come into clash with the Government, for this action amounts to an invasion of the rights of the general public which it is the duty of the latter to protect and safeguard. No government can ever equally satisfy all its subjects, and if it were permissible for one to break such laws as one did not approve of, then all peace and all order would be instantly at an end. The entire civilization rests on respect for the law. To destroy that respect is to destroy civilization itself and to revert to a state of barbarism. Hence it is that Islam lays so much emphasis on the law being scrupulously respected and obeyed, under all conditions and all circumstances, and has prohibited the exercise of retaliation where it clashes with the law.

The question now arises : If you live under a government or among a community of people that act high-handedly and deny you your just rights, and all peaceful and constitutional means have failed to redress your grievances, what course of action are you to adopt to obtain protection for yourself ? I shall deal with this question in some future article.

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## Sir Sayyad Ahmad of Aligarh and Hazrat Ahmad of Qadian compared and contrasted

[We give below a question and its answer which throws light on the comparative value of the great religious awakening brought about by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian and the educational work done by the late Sir Sayyad Ahmad the founder of the Aligarh College—*Ed. R. R.*]

**Q.** It is claimed by the Ahmadies that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet whom God had appointed for the moral and spiritual guidance of the whole world in general and for that of the Muslim in particluar. Disclaiming any intention to detract from the great and enduring work done by Hazrat Mirza Sahib, could it not be suggested that there had been reformers, especially among the Muslims who also did wonderful reformatory work for their community ; the late Sir Sayyad Ahmad stands out very prominent among them. In what way the work of the Mirza Sahib be regarded as more useful and more permanent and enduring for the Muslim community than that of Sir Sayyad Ahmad ? Could you show in what way the work done by Hazrat Mirza Sahib differed from that done by Sir Sayyad and how could it take precedence over that of the founder of the Aligarh College ?

**A.** It must be remembered that Ahmad of Qadian (Hazrat Mirza Sahib) was not the outcome of any current of modern thought, nor did he reflect in his person the present-day tendencies of the so-called new learning. As a matter of fact, the teachings of Ahmad of Qadian (peace and the blessings of God be upon him) were diametrically opposed to all the currents of modern thought. If we look carefully into the matter we discover that the new school of thought consists of two currents : *firstly*, that there need not exist any deep relationship between God and man but that man should enjoy independence. Accordingly, we see that all the religions, whether new or old, are making efforts to adapt themselves to

this tendency. They are striving to so change the form and significance of the acts of worship or to make such reduction in them as to thereby attract people to themselves. The *second* current of thought is that the foundations of society that have been laid for centuries should undergo no change, not because the established laws of society are better and more perfect but because people have become accustomed to them and are not prepared to leave them. The old as well as the new religions are making efforts to adapt their teachings to this social tendency because they realize that they do not possess the power to resist it. Accordingly, we see that the followers of all these religions are striving to clear their position with respect to such matters as the taking and giving of interest, the veiling of the female sex, polygamy, etc. They are making the teachings of their respective religions conform to the established social customs of the age. Unlike all of these, however, Ahmad of Qadian (peace and the blessings of God be upon him) based his teachings purely on the ground of religion and did not base them on any current of modern thought. This distinction marks him out as the true reformer of the age, for he was not like the horn of time that he should only trumpet out the notes put forth by the latter. He was opposed to both the currents of the present times *i.e.*, (1) freedom from the bonds of religion and (2) social slavery. He neither abolished worship altogether nor made any reduction in it. On the other hand he revealed to the world the spirit and reality underlying the acts of worship, and by creating in the minds of the people a sincere fervour for worship, he strengthened the relationship between man and his Maker. He not only called the attention of the people to the necessity of obligatory prayers but also exhorted them to cultivate the habit of performing optional ones. For, as he explained it, worship is not a penalty imposed upon man but is a certain means of his spiritual progress. Fasting which had been discarded not only by the followers of other religions but also by the educated section of the Muslims of these times, he explained and proved to be necessary for the spirtual advancement of mankind. Similarly, he discovered to the world the spirit underlying the divine commandments concerning pilgrimage and sacrifice, and

exhorted people to faithfully act on these commandments of God.

He released the people from social slavery and explained to them their mistake in blindly following the present-day laws of society, and he proved the excellence of the social teachings of Islam by congent reasons. He exposed the evil underlying the taking and giving of interest, showed the usefulness of the Islamic injunctions about the *pardah*, proved the necessity of polygamy under certain circumstances, and explained the importance of the institution of divorce. In short, he openly advocated those teachings of Islam about which the people could not raise their voice because they were afraid of opposing the current of modern thought with respect to these matters, and he did not care a bit for the false ideas of the present people.

We do not wish to make a mention here of the doubts and superstitions to be found among the uneducated people which Ahmad of Qadian strove to root out, for it may be said about them that time itself was reforming them. The teachings of Ahmad of Qadian (peace and the blessings of God be upon him) which he gave in opposition to the generally accepted ideas of the present age produced this salutary effect that hundreds and thousands of men who were finding themselves powerless against the current of the time gained strength to stop and think, and as a result of this independent thinking, they came to the conclusion that the teachings of Islam were superior to all other teachings and the code of Islam was perfect in all matters. Those who were a prey to a thousaud doubts and misgivings concerning the existence of God, nay, those who were atheists out and out and were steeped in materialism, obtained a new life through him and became not only believers in the living and powerful God but also began to find bliss and pleasure in His worship and remembrance. They are enlightened with the new learning of the West and their minds are imbued with the new thoughts of the age, but their hearts are full of divine love and their heads remain bowed down before their Lord. They spend their days and nights in the remembrance of God and though they enjoy high secular education

yet they set their religion above everything else, and their lives present true models of the teachings of Islam.

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The Ahmad of Qadian also released people from the captivity of the social laws of the time, and opened out to them a field of free and independent thinking so much so that in spite of the opposition and hostility of the followers of all religions and in spite of the tendencies of the age, his followers are engaged day and night in the social reformation of the world according to the teachings of Islam. They are striving to displace in others the life of ease and luxury with that of reformation, chastity and good morals. Ahmad of Qadian (on whom be peace) has not created fanaticism or religious madness among his followers, neither has he made the love of his own person the essence of his religion and the centre of his system so as to concentrate their attention on this point as is the way of those men who desire to create a spirit of sacrifice and self-denial among a certain people at the cost of other noble qualities. He put every thing at its proper place and rank, and made every effort to keep alive the faculty of reason in man and to further develop it. But in spite of this his followers are ever ready to sacrifice their lives and properties for the sake of religion. Their example is like that of the blessed companions of the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace and the blessings of God) concerning whom the Holy Quran says :—*i. e.* "Some of them have fulfilled the object of their life and the desire of their hearts, and the others are waiting for the same." (XXXIII : 23.)

The teachings of Ahmad of Qadian have produced such an effect on the members of the Ahmadiyya Community that although they do not differ from others in their dress and external appearance, yet they are easily recognised by others. The reason of this lies in their high morals which distinguished them from others. The freedom of their speech from abuse and foul language, their readiness to undergo trouble for the sake of others, their self-denial and their abstinence from fraud and deception make them conspicuous in every assembly, and any man who is acquainted with the character of the Ahmdies can recognise an Ahmadi when he comes across him in a Railway train or at any

meeting or at any other place of gathering, although he may not be personally acquainted with him.

Even the most illiterate Ahmdi is found to possess a sharp intellect and an extraordinary aptitude for the discussion of religious subjects. The teachings of Ahmad of Qadian have wrought a miraculous change in the character of Ahmadies. On the one hand, they have abandoned the extreme irreligiousness and indifference which is to be found in the people of the world and are seen to be inebriated with love for the Word of God, His apostles and the Ahmad of Qadian, and they look upon themselves as mirrors prepared for the reflection of Divine attributes, and they pass their days and nights in the remembrance and worship of God, and are seen to be occupied in the acquirement of spiritual blessings at the expense of their material benefits in this age of wordly competition ; and on the other they are among the most severe critics who are not prepared to accept anything without reason. They accept a thing only when it is reasonably explained to them and try to convince others also of the truth of their statement by means of arguments. They are not opposed to modern sciences but are in favour of their spread. They do not look upon the sciences as opposed to religion but as subservient to it. In short, they maintain their independence in all matters, that is to say, they neither blindly believe in the sayings of their forefathers nor do they necessarily accept every new theory as true. They do not display readiness to adopt every new idea but test everything with the criterion of knowledge and reason, and accord to every fact the position which has been given to it by God.

A very important revolution which Ahmad of Qadian has brought about in the Ahmadiyya Community is the feeling of putting religion above the world. Every Ahmadi looks upon his property as God's trust with him. Such of them as have been properly instructed in the teachings of the Movement contribute 1/16 of their income monthly towards the funds of the community for religious purposes. Besides this ordinary monthly subscription, they contribute their quota to extraodinary funds also. Thus every member of the organised portion of the

community contributes from 1/10 to 1/3 of his income to the funds of the community according to the degree of his zeal in faith. This sacrifice on their part appears to be so strange in the eyes of the people that some of them look upon the community as very rich while others think that they are receiving aid from the Government, while the truth is that the Government neither does nor can aid them and the community is so poor that perhaps there is no other community in India so poor as they. But every one of them at the sacrifice of his personal needs and for the religious, moral, and intellectual reformation of the world contributes so much money that among other people even men who are ten times as rich as they, are not spending as much money for the good of their fellow-beings.

This is very briefly, the work done by Hazrat Mirza Sahib. The late Sir Sayyad only established a College at Aligarh. The difference in kind and quality of these two reformers, one divine, the other wordly, is quite evident.

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## ABU BAKR THE FAITHFUL

After suffering untold persecution for thirteen long years in his native city, Mecca, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and the blessings of God he upon him) was commanded by God to leave it and go to Medina, a town 200 miles away from Mecca, which afterwards became the first capital of the Muslim Empire and the seat of the Caliphate. He left Mecca on June 20, 622 A. D. The Meccans, who had surrounded the Prophet's house at night hoping to kill him at some convenient hour, finding that their plot had frustated followed him in hot pursuit. The Prophet was accompanied by his most devoted and faithful companion, Abu Bakr. They took refuge in a cave only three miles distant from Mecca. The enemies of the Prophet had laid a heavy price on his head. One hundred camels was the reward that was to be given to any one who would have brought the Prophet dead or alive. The desire to get this big reward had made many persons search far and wide for the Prophet. Arabia is reputed for a class of guides who are very adept and generally unerring in finding out the track of a fugitive on sand, grassy ground, and even in water.

Their guides brought the Meccans to the mouth of the cave in which the Prophet and Abu Bakr had taken refuge and said, "Either Muhammad has ascended up to heaven or he is in the cave." The cave was not deep. Abu Bakr, the Holy Prophet's companion, saw from the cave the feet of their seekers and tormentors and said, "If only one of them happens to look down upon his feet then we are lost, O Prophet of God." The Prophet returned an answer which indicates the calmness and equanimity of his mind even under such critical and dangerous circumstances: "Be not afraid, Abu Bakr," said he, "God is with us."

This incident which is only one of hundreds of which the life of the Prophet is replete throws light on the following few important facts:—

(1) That the Prophet suffered great hardships and

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relentless persecution at the hands of his own kith and kin and in his own native town as a price of his adhesion to the sacred cause of inviting his people to give up idol-worship and live a clean and healthy life.

(2) That on account of this continuous persecution the Prophet had to leave the town in which he was born and brought up and lived the best part of his life for a place where very few people knew him and about the reception which was to be accorded to him in that town he was very doubtful.

(3) That his faith in the truth of his mission remained unshaken in the most trying hours.

(4) That he believed in the ultimate success of his mission.

(5) That there is a Supreme Being called God who had sent him on his mission and Who protected him against all possible danger to his life.

(6) That Abu Bakr's belief in the truth of the mission of the Prophet was implicit.

(7) That the anxiety shown by Abu Bakr at that un-nerving moment was not for the safety of his own person but for that of his Master.

(8) That though Abu Bakr's belief in the truth of the Prophet's mission was quite perfect as was the Prophet's own, yet the Prophet's belief was by far sublimer, and serener than Abu Bakr's as the latter showed signs of fear and anxiety while the Prophet consoled and comforted him in spite of the fact that the Prophet himself was in danger and not Abu Bakr.

This incident which is very small as regards its occurence but very great as regards its implications and results by itself proves the truth of the Prophet's noble and sacred mission. That the Prophet showed an utter disregard for his life when he was manifestly in danger of losing it, does indicate his tenacity of purpose and resoluteness of mind and also his own belief in the truth of his mission but this equanimity of mind in very dangerous circumstances alone does not prove that he was a prophet of God. But Abu Bakr's life-long attachment to him

and his faithfulness to him in all the vicissitudes of his chequered life does go a long way to prove the uniform purity of the Prophet's character and the truth of his mission. Abu Bakr was one of those very few persons with whom the Prophet had intimate relations before he was entrusted with the grandest mission which any human being has ever been entrusted with. Abu Bakr had ample opportunities to study the character of his friend from very close quarters and he did study it. The fact that Abu Bakr believed in the Prophet as soon as he heard of his claim and remained loyal to him throughout his hardships and privations and accompanied him in his Flight when he was declared as an outlaw, does certainly prove the truthfulness of the mission and claims of Our Great and Noble Master.

The Holy Prophet stands unequalled in this respect as he stands unequalled in many other respects, that those who knew him most loved him most and were the first to believe in him. With his wife, Khadija, he had spent the prime of his life. She believed in the Prophet's mission even when he himself was not satisfied as to what the Voice he had heard in the Cave meant. Ali was brought up by him and he (Ali) never evinced the slightest hesitancy to believe in him though his father, Abu Talib, despite his standing by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in all his trials and tribulations could not see his way to foresake the religion of his forefathers. Zaid lived with him as his son. He, too, like his mistress, Khadija, believed in the Prophet as soon as he heard of his claims. Abu Bakr was highly respected in the Meccan society for his foresight, shrewdness, uprightness, and nobility of character. The fact that such a man should have believed in the Prophet and should have risked his own life on several occasions for him and served his Master faithfully till he went the way of all flesh does certainly show that the Holy Prophet had inspired those who had come in contact with him with such feelings of devotion and faithfulness towards him as have been the special characteristics of the followers of the Messengers of God in all ages.

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# THE QUEST OF ISLAM

BY MR. OMAR CLEVELAND, AN AMERICAN CONVERT TO ISLAM.

From the dawn of time unto the wondrous present, man has been incurably religious. The belief in a higher power than man can be traced back to remote antiquity.

In the opening words of the Holy Quran, Allah is described as "the Lord of the worlds", thereby widening the conception of the Divine Being. The great theme of the Book of Books is the unity of God, the keynote of Islam. "Everything that exists in the heavens or in the earth declares His glory and His perfection and that He is the Mighty, the Wise."

Throughout the pages of the sacred scriptures—all testify to the oneness of the Creator. Pure and undefiled religion has ever been saved unto the world by the unselfish devotion to religion of rare souls of the past, whose bones are now forgotten dust.

Those who comprehended sacred truth imparted their knowledge to such as were fitted to receive it in terms intelligible in the light of their own time, and woe betide us, if we neglect, as Moslems, to hear the voices of those who discerned truth from a different angle from that by which we may discern it in our own day.

Men never rise higher than their religious ideals and humanity approximates its highest expression when it lives its noblest religious conceptions. In Islam if man works within the laws of nature and lives aright he is the master of his own destiny. But should he violate or defy those laws, punishment is sure and certain and he will fall the victim of indiscretions created by himself. Islam also imposes upon us personal responsibility for all our actions. The Holy Quran, says in part regarding the day of resurrection, "Read thy Book, there needest one but thyself to make out an account against thee this day". The

aim of Islam is plainly demonstrated—surrender of self comes first. Allah must have first place—even self, the false god that has the largest number of worshippers must be put aside that Allah, may have the supreme place as a living God, whose love purposeth all things, whose wisdom planeth all things and whose power encompasseth all things.

A return to a whole-hearted, whole-souled, whole-minded belief in Allah, must now, as in the past, be the hope of those who would be true to heavenly visions. A man who only professes to be a Moslem is blind, although he has physical eyes, yet he is mentally and spiritually blind.

Through his physical eyes he may see the manifold glories of the heavens, or the forests rich with their autumnal gold and the kaleidoscopic changes of the seasons, but as he has no spiritual or mental vision, he is blind of heart—he is dead and he sees not the beauties, excellences and power, nor the goodness, love and wisdom of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

However, we must not let the lack of vision of such men cause a wavering of our own faith, for never more will any one inaugurate a faith more noble or a religion more true and far-reaching than Islam. Anent two simple doctrines—there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah, is all that is demanded of the convert to Islam, for that has brought light to countless erring souls and peace of mind, to those who were anxious for the light of heaven, and helped many who were eager to have direct communion with Allah.

The pages of the Holy Quran vibrate to-day with the same sublime message as they did in the days of the Prophet, and declare that every blessing of God was meant for those who will use it in the service of God, which stands for the service of humanity.

A perusal of its contents have instilled in many, a divine fervour to accept its message and take up the cause, for as the Holy Quran, truly says, "This day have I perfected your religion for you, and have completed My favours upon you and chosen for you the religion of Islam—Surrender to Allah".

# IS HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD SAHIB THE PROMISED MESSIAH?

Many people interested in Ahmadiyyat who are desirous of being convinced of the truth of its Holy Founder, often naturally, ask the following question:—Providing I accept your arguments in proof of prophethood being still attainable by the sincere followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be upon him), what are the facts in support of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib's claim ? (peace and blessings of God be on him).

The Holy Word of God, which has been sent to us from time to time, is the only true source of guidance to us in such matters. Therefore we must first refer to them in order to know how to recognise a true claimant from a false one.

Firstly we will take the Holy Quran, God's last and most perfect Book of laws, in which we read as follows :—" And a Believer of the Family of Pharaoh who had concealed his faith, said, ' will you kill a man for that he says my Lord is Allah and he has certainly come to you with evidence from your Lord ? If he is a liar then on him be his lie, and if he is truthful there shall befall you something of what he threatens, VERILY ALLAH DOES NOT DIRECT HIM TO SUCCESS WHO IS A SINNER AND A LIAR '." Ch. XL : 29.

In Ch. VI : 21 we read :—" And who is more iniquitous than him who invents a lie against Allah or calls His signs lies; VERILY HE DOTH NOT ALLOW THE INIQUITOUS TO PROSPER."

Note in these verses that not only the person who invents lies against God, but also those who classify God's signs as his, in spite of all evidence as to their truth, will come under the wrath of the Omnipotent.

Again in Ch. LXIX : 45, 48 we read :—" Had he forged some discourses concerning us, truly we would have seized him by the right hand and would surely have cut his jugular vein then none of you could be a defence for him."

Again we read in Ch. XXXIX : 5 " certainly Allah shall not guide him who is a liar and infidel."

Now let us see what the Bible says regarding the fate of false prophets. In Dent. XIII : 5 says :- ".....and that prophet or dreamer of dreams SHALL BE PUT TO DEATH because he has spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God."

In Jer. XIV we read:—" By sword and famine shall those (false) prophets be consumed."

Again we are told in Matthew VII : 15—20. " Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly they are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles ? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but the corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit IS HEWN DOWN, AND CAST INTO THE FIRE. THEREFORE BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM."

Again Dent. XVIII : 20 says :—" But the prophet who shall speak a word presumptuously in my name which I have not commanded him to speak.....*that same prophet shall die.*"

Again we read in acts V : 36—40. "For before these days rose up Thondas, a false prophet boasting himself to be somebody: to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves, who was slain and all as many as obeyed him were dispersed and brought to nought.

After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the enrolment, and drew away some of the people after him ; he

also perished ; and, all, as many as obeyed him were scattered abroad.

And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men and let them alone ; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown.

But if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them ; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God."

In these verses Almighty God has shown us a sure and easy method by which to differentiate a true prophet from an impostor and our next duty is to discover whether Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib (peace be on him) has or has not proved his claim according to the conditions laid down in the Holy Scriptures.

It was prophesied that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him) would be like unto Moses and that his successors would bear the same resemblance as the Israelites. As the line of successors of the Prophet Moses (peace be on him) was terminated at the beginning of the 14th century after Moses, by a Messiah, it is only natural that a similar occurrence would be required in the case of the last Law-bearing prophet in order to complete the similarly mentioned in Dent. : XVIII.

The declaration of Harat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib (peace be on him) to the world, that he had been chosen by Almighty God as a Prophet, and the Promised World Reformer for whom all mankind had been waiting, was made in the year 1889, corresponding with the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th century, A. H. note the similarity of time between the first and second Messiahs.

After this announcement of Hazrat Mirza Sahib, almost all sects and creeds rose against him in bitter opposition, among whom, the Muslim Maulvis were, and are still, his deadliest opponents. By their intrigues, plots and stratagems they tried their utmost to bring him, and those who believed in him, to

naught, but all efforts to defeat Heaven's purpose, met with the inevitable result of hopeless failure.

During the lifetime of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) many people went to Qadian with the set purpose of doing him bodily harm, but in many cases came away ready to lay down their lives for his sake. In each case he was warned of the danger beforehand.

His enemies, both Muslims and Christians, on another occasion were hopelessly baffled in their efforts to involve him, in a murder case, because of the Almighty's protection and fair judgment of Capt. Douglas, an Englishman, who was shrewd enough to note the falsity underlying the charge in spite of the strong trumped-up evidence.

An Arya Samajist, named Lekh Ram, a Brahman by caste, went to see Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib at Qadian and there asserted that the Vedas were the Word of God and that the Holy Quran was not.

After some discussion on the subject the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) told Lekh Ram that he could easily decide this point by publishing a prophecy concerning him (Hazrat Mirza Sahib), while the latter, inspired by the God of the Holy Quran should also publish a prophecy against Lekh Ram.

Thereupon a prophecy was published by Lekh Ram to the effect that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib (peace be on him) would die of cholera within three years, while Almighty God revealed to the Promised Messiah that Lekh Ram would be murdered within six years, that the day of his murder would be next to the Muslim Festival, and that shortly after his death plague would rage in the Punjab. This prophecy was also published by Hazrat Mirza Sahib in various books.

The death of Lekh Ram in the manner predicted at last bore witness to the fact that the existing Vedas are not of Divine origin and also strongly supports the truth of Hazrat

Mirza Sahib's claim (peace and blessings of God be upon him).

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It was revealed to the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) that Almighty God would send His wrath upon the people in form of plague, because of their reviling and opposing God's Holy Prophet, but that the house of the Promised Messiah would be given Divine protection.

Accordingly the plague eventually made its appearance and many people from different parts of the plague-stricken areas flocked to the house of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib (peace be on him) and although the plague raged in the vicinity of his house, which was packed to over-crowding, not a single soul was affected.

Once when the Promised Messiah was on a journey, he was warned during his sleep, that the roof under which he slept was in danger of falling in. Three times this vision was shown to him and on the third occasion he rose fully awake with the certain knowledge that this was no ordinary dream and woke the others who were sleeping near him. No sooner had they vacated the room when the roof crashed in exactly over the place where a few seconds before they had been sleeping.

Any person with an unbiased mind can easily judge from these few instances the truth or falsity of the claim of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib (peace be on him) by comparing them with the scripture-verses already quoted. According to Almighty God's Law, a false prophet will be put to death, but in the above events we find that the Promised Messiah has been given in each case Divine help and protection.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) died in the year 1908 and although nearly half a century has passed since he first made his claim, and in spite of the most bitter opposition, his movement has spread to the four corners of the globe, and his followers now number tens of millions.

Qadian, the headquarters of the Ahmadiyya Community, was only a small, almost unknown, village when the Promised Messiah first announced his claim as the World Reformer. Since then it has grown to a fair-sized town of approximately two miles square and is the proud possessor of Colleges, High Schools, Primary Schools, Libraries, Post and Telegraph Office and about six mosques. It is visited annually by nearly 20,000 persons. The town of Qadian has become so important that, where previously the railway line terminated at Batala, it has now been extended and regular train service now calls at the former place twice daily.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib (peace be on him) professed to take men to Heaven in this life. This is an easy thing, you may say, for anyone to promise, but to actually bring it into effect is not the work of an impostor. To-day many of his followers are enjoying the blessing of spiritual communion with their Creator. I, the humble writer of this article, swear on oath that I have been shown several future events, which came to pass some time afterwards. Two of these occurred after one year and two months respectively. Also I have witnessed on many occasions the answers to my prayers.

Compare all these instances with the scripture verses :— " Verily Allah does not direct him to success who is a sinner and a liar," " He does not allow the iniquitous to prosper " and " By their fruits ye shall know them."

Another strong proof in support of Hazrat Mirza Sahib's claim is, the eclipse of the moon and sun, occuring respectively on the 13th and 28th of the month of Ramazan, of which a reference is to be found in the Holy Quran and detailed particulars in a tradition. This sign was to denote that the Promised World Reformer had already made his advent.

The above phenomenal occurrence, foretold thirteen hundred years before, was manifested in such a way that it was visible to all.

Again it was prophesied that pilgrimage to Mecca would be

prohibited for a while at the advent of the Promised Messiah, that a new mode of conveyance in place of camels would come into vogue *i.e.* construction of railways throughout the world and use of aeroplanes, also the mixing together of people in far-off lands, increase of knowledge, multiplicity of canals, the spreading of newspapers, etc. Everyone in our own time has actually witnessed the truth of these prophecies.

The belief that Jesus Christ was still alive in the Heavens and would make a bodily descent in the latter days, was held both by Muslims and Christians alike and this was the pedestal upon which Christianity had stood for many hundreds of years. This argument, when used to prove the superiority of Jesus Christ over the Holy Prophet, Muhammad (peace be on them both), was always a sore point to the Muslims, as they themselves supported the Christians by fully concurring with them that Jesus Christ had been granted special Divine favour while their own prophet had died a natural death and lay buried in the ground like all other mortals.

This pedestal, however, completely crumbled before the onslaught of Mehdi, of whom it was predicted that he would come to break the Cross. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him) has done a great service to Islam and gave a death-blow to Christianity by proving from the Holy Quran, Bible, Traditions and other historical facts, that Jesus Christ (peace be on him) lived to the age of 120 years, died a natural death (as the Law of Almighty God has ordained for all human beings) and lies buried in Srinagar, Kashmir.

Some of the most reputed saints in India had been informed of the truth of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib's claim in vision. One of them died thirty years before the appearance of the Promised Messiah. He was known by the name of Gulab Shah and lived in the Ludhiana District. He informed Mian Karim Baksh of Jamalpur that Jesus would be born at Qadian, that he would come to Ludhiana. Mian Karim Baksh was a pious and God-fearing old man and he related this story to Hazrat Mirza Sahib when he was in

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Ludhiana. His relation of the prophecy of Gulab Shah made the Maulvis his enemies.

In conclusion I will quote an extract from " The Ahmadia Movement " being the paper written by the Head of the Ahmadia Community for the Religious Conference held in London in September 1924.

" Sisters and Brothers! Before bringing this discourse to a close, I wou'd like to point out three ways of assurance for those who ordinarily are not satisfied by a simple hearing of facts, however strongly supported they may be by convincing proofs and trustworthy evidence, and demand a personal experience of Divine signs. God has, out of His mercy, placed certain and sure means at the disposal of such people for their assurance and firm faith. The Promised Messiah (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) has accordingly suggested three ways for them.

The first way suggested is that having freed themselves from bias of any sort the seekers after truth should fervently pray to God the Almighty for forty nights continuously before going to bed, saying " O God, if this person, (Ahmad) who claims to be Thy Messenger, with the expressed mission of establishing Islam, the religion of God, in the world, and convincing the people as to its truth by showing Islam in its pristine beauty, is really from Thee and Thou hast sent him as a Messenger I, who am at a loss to understand his truth through facts and arguments, because the real facts are not fully before me, pray to Thee O Haq (Truth) who is the source of all truth, O Hadi (Guide) who is the source of all guidance, O Rauf (Kind) who does not like to see His creatures in difficulties, to open my heart for the acceptance of his truth." If one prays thus sincerely for forty nights regularly one is sure to be guided to the right path, and God will open his heart and will show him a sign for the truth of the Promised Messiah. The decision at which he will thus arrive will be under the guidance of God and as a result of his prayers to Him. He will, therefore, feel in his mind faith and assurance. I confidently hope that seekers after truth in the West will not ignore this just and easy course for arriving at the truth. I do hope they will admit its importance because in this way they can neither

be played a trick upon by any clever person, nor will they be taken in merely by the masterly words of an orator. It is in reality an appeal to the Lord God from His humble servants and the decision then comes from the most merciful God whose decision is the best and truest of all.

There is a second course open to those opponents of the Promised Messiah who after thoroughly going into his claims and studying the arguments put forward by him in support of his truth still positively declare that he is an impostor and that God has not sent him for the reformation of the world and who go so far as to say that his claim is nothing but a fabrication and is only a fraud to mislead the people. The Promised Messiah did not let such people go unchallanged. He proposed to them that they should declare their disbelief on oath after going through his book entitled the *Haqiqat-ul-Wahi*, a book dealing with most of the important signs that had come to pass up to the date of its compilation. Their declaration should be to this effect that they have thoroughly read the whole of the *Haqiqat-ul-Wahi* and that even after its perusal they think Ahmad tob e a pretender and impostor and that if they are not right in their conclusion and Ahmad is true in his claims, God may send down upon them such wrath of His, as he has been sending upon the enemies of His holy Messengers.

The Promised Messiah positively says that such opponents would be overtaken by the wrath of God as their predecessors, the opponents of the former Prophets, were overtaken by it, and they would serve as an example for others. We have known it for certain that those who insisted on being visited by the wrath of God instead of invoking His Mercy and took up a defiant attitude, have always been visited by extraordinary punishment. No doubt they were doomed to death but others were saved through them, *i.e.*, by seeing the disastrous end of their opposition.

There is a third way for judging the truth of his claims which the Promised Messiah proposed for the learned advocates of the different religions. Admitting the fact that a religion is known by effects as a tree is known by its fruits, we should see through the advocates of which religion is manifested the glory of God. In accordance with this principle the following

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proposal was put forward by him. Twenty persons suffering from some dangerous diseases of the worst type should be selected and then they should be equally divided by lot between the parties, half of them going to him and the other half to his opponents. Both parties should then pray to God for the recovery of their respective patients. The Promised Messiah declares that if anybody would ever come forward in this contest of prayer, God should grant him (the Promised Messiah) victory over the advocates of other religions to such a degree that people would have to confess that the Hand of God was with him.

Some might think that this proposal could not be put in practice now since the Promised Messiah is now no more in this world. To such people I wish to say that the Messengers of God are not like magicians who give a performance for the amusement of the people and then move on. They are a blessing of God for the world. They not only give glad tidings to their followers but actually bring boons for them. The greatest proof of their truth is that they leave behind them a community at whose hands God continues to manifest His powers. So if there are any people who are willing to see such a sign, provided that their acceptance of the truth may be advantageous to its spread and propagation, God, through His grace and mercy will undoubtedly show them this sign even now at the hands of the righteous followers of the Promised Messiah, because God is very merciful to His people and is ever desirous to take them out of darkness into light."

In spite of all the above testimonies, of which these are only a few, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has been declared by many as a liar and impostor. His movement is still being bitterly opposed by all creeds, but still it continues its steady victorious march ahead.

Again I quote the following scripture verse as a warning to his opponents :—"And now I say unto you, refrain from these men and let them alone, for if this counsel and this work be of men, it will be overthrown. But if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow it lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God."

A. R. SCOTS.

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# THE IMPACT OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION ON ISLAM

[By M. N. Bhatty]

A few European writers have, for the sake of carrying on propaganda against Islam, seized on the social, political or economical changes which have been or are being effected in Islamic countries, as symptoms foreboding a speedy disintegration of Islam. One of them writes:

"A change of a subtle but significant kind has come over the Muslim world since 1914 and Islam is passing through a crisis as important for its very existence as the period of Crusades, but whereas the Crusades with their repeated attacks from without made Islam a more compact and self-conscious unit, forces have been at work during recent days which appear to be disintegrating the Muslim world from within. There has emerged in the Muslim world a new mentality. The typical Muslim of pre-war days was an incarnation of complacent self-assurance his very bearing showed that he thanked God daily. He closed all the avenues of his mind against every thing that was non-Islamic. Indeed the Muslim was the most unapproachable man on earth. In his fanatical bigotry he reserved his special contempt for all who professed any other faith. To-day that self-assurance and arrogant assumption of superiority is weakening and a questioning attitude of mind is appearing. The Muslim world which in pre-war days was a closely-woven whole knit firmly together by many bonds and responding without hesitation to the cry of Pan-Islam reeled under the shattering impact of war. Fassiparous nationalisms, claimant race movements and Bolshevic ferment have worked as solvents in the blood of Pan-Islamic unity. Islam is no longer shut away from the rest of the world. Western civilization is meeting it at a thousand points and the disintegration of Islam has begun. The accepted standards and ideals are being brought under review, its dogmas questioned and its sanctions undermined."

These lines indicate that at one time it was expected that the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire would bring the disintegration of Islam. It seems that the author is little acquainted with the history of Islam. Islam has, during its brief history of 1,300 years, received much more severe setbacks and experienced much greater eclipses, but every time its inherent vitality has successfully withstood calamitous cataclysms. If Islam ever had any serious fear of extinction and annihilation it was when Baghdad was sacked in 1260, when palaces and mosques were destroyed by fire, when the patients in the hospitals and the students and professors in the colleges were put to the sword and when the immortal works of great and learned men were consumed to ashes and books were thrown into the fire, or if there was any likelihood of Islam going to the limbo of dead creeds it was when after the death of Malik Shah and his able Minister, Nizam-ul-Mulk, the Muslims were rent by internal discord and dissentions and the storm of savage fanaticism, which in the annals of Christendom is called "the Holy War" burst in all its fury over Western Asia, when after the fall of Jerusalem the Muslims were forced to throw themselves from the tops of towers and houses, were burnt alive and dragged from their subterranean retreats, were hauled to the public places and immolated on piles of the dead. A careful reader of Islamic History would at once know that the political expansion and decadence of Islam had little bearing on Islam as a religion. Spiritual conquests of Islam had continued in spite of political reverses. The islands of Sumatra and Malay Archipelago were won over by the Muslim missionary at a time when the Mongols were sacking Baghdad and the Muslims were expelled from Cordova.

The above lines also convey an impression that Islam is breaking down against the impact of Western civilization. This view is shared by a large number of persons and hence it requires a careful study. In order to discover the truth of the matter, one must understand the nature and extent of westernisation that is going on in Islamic countries.

Mr. Gibb in his book "Whither Islam" gives a detailed account of the process, "The most remarkable feature of the Muslim world in these early decades of the twentieth century is not that it is becoming westernised but that it desires to be westernised.....However greatly the degree of westernisation may vary from region to region, the writers of the four preceding chapters have shown clearly that it is present in all. For our present purposes it is important to trace the stages in the increasing mobilization of western influences and to assign them their true place in the frame-work of Islamic society.

"The first stage is the imitation or adaptation of outward forms of occidental life. The thin end of the wedge of westernisation has generally been the adoption of western military apparatus and technique in some countries, now more than a century old.....This has, usually, though not always, been followed by the adoption of western dress and in some regions has extended to houses, furniture, social habits, manners, forms of speech and many other intimate details in behaviour.

"The second stage of westernisation is the adaptation of western technical processes to oriental life. Here the effect goes deeper, in proportion to the range of interests embraced and touches most nearly the lines of the great mass of the people." The writer goes on describing how this has led to the rise of urban proletariat and how in the same way, the application of European technical methods to irrigation and agriculture has led to a rural proletariat being created.

Further on he says,

"Far-reaching though the economic effects of westernisation may be, a more prominent place in the public eye is taken by the application of western technical methods to the organization of Government and administration."

The extracts from Mr. Gibb's Book, which have been given above make it clear that the westernisation that has taken place or that is being desired is nothing but an exterior adaptation. Civilization is always a matter of method. It is reflected in things created by man's ingenuity to facilitate the smooth running of life, as it is actually lived in this world. It is inextricably connected with Empire and the main problem to which it offers a solution is that of earning livelihood. If the Islamic countries have of late evinced a desire to make use of the scientific inventions and if on account of its political power and prestige, West is imposing its civilization on the East, it is no reason to say that West is superior to Islam in point of culture. On the other hand West has still much to learn from Islam. Mr. Gibb says at another place in the same book, " Within the western world Islam still maintains the balance between exaggarated opposites. Opposed equally to the anarchy of European nationalism and the Regimentation of Russian Communism, it has not yet succumbed to that obsession with the economic side of life which is characteristic of present-day Europe and present-day Russia alike. Its social ethic has been admirably summed up by professor Massignon : 'Islam has the merit of standing for a very equalitarian conception of the contribution of each citizen by the tithe to the resources of the community; it is hostile to unrestricted exchange, to banking capital, to state loans, to indirect taxes on objects of prime necessity, but it holds to the right of the father and the husband, to private property and to commercial capital. Here again it occupies an intermediate position between the doctrines of bourgeois capitalism and Bolshevist Communism'."

Nor should the services of Islam to the world culture be forgotten. Mr. Sedillot referring to the contributions of the Arabs between the eight and the thirteen centuries of the Christian era says, " The vast literature which existed during this period, the multifarious productions of genius, the precious inventions, all of which attest a marvellous activity of intellect justify the opinion that the Arabs were

our masters in everything. They furnished us on the one hand with inestimable materials for the history of the Middle Ages, with travels, with the happy idea of biographical dictionaries, on the other, an industry without equal, architecture magnificient in execution and thought and important discoveries in art."

This question can be studied in another way. If Islam is really disintegrating because of the process of westernisation, let us see the effect it has produced upon Islam as a religion. In what way has the attitude of the Muslims changed towards traditional religious culture? The same writer in his book 'Whither Islam' gives the following reply.

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"The Muslim peoples remain deeply attached to the religion of Islam and intensely convinced of its superiority. That here and there individual Muslims especially of the upper classes are lukewarm in their faith and neglectful of its observances or even confess themselves as atheists, matters as little as that amongst those who call themselves Muslims there are groups whose religion is nothing more than a compound of primitive superstitions. The vital forces of Islam, as a creed, as a rule of life and as an ethical system remain unimpaired."

As a matter of fact, what the Christian Missionaries regard out of blind prejudice the disintegration is the regeneration of Islam. Towards the close of the nineteenth century, when the political power of Islam began to decline God sent 'The promised Mahdi' in the person o Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (on whom be peace and blessing of God). On account of his advent Islam has permeated every nook and corner of the world. Regular Muslim missions are working in all parts of the globe—England, Germany, America, Austria, West and East Africa, Trinidad and Phillipines, Hong Kong and Australia, Mauritius and Strait Settlements, and are gaining converts in large numbers, not from the poor classes like Christianity,

but from the educated and high class people, in the teeth of opposition put in their way by Christian priests."

The progress of Islam has created apprehensions in the minds of the Christian Missionaries. Bishop Fogarty Damaraland once gave expression to his fears on the southward march of Islam in Africa.

" The whole of Northern Africa follows Islam and that religion is coming further and further south. What will it offer the native? First, it will make him sober, for it is contrary to the Mohammadan faith to touch strong drink. Secondly, it will give him a real sense of brotherhood. Islam knows no distinction of colour. Thirdly it will offer the native tremendous rewards in Paradise if he falls while fighting for the Crescent. If we fail in our duty as Christians here, Islam will sweep us from the country."

On the other hand, the contact between Islam and Christianity afforded by the Great War and the recent Missionary activities has brought home to the Westerners the conviction that Christianity cannot satisfy the spiritual needs of the people. Christianity has as a matter of fact failed as a religion. Large masses of Christians in Europe have ceased to believe in Christianity. Many of them have drifted away altogether from religion, others have been seized with a fervent desire to search the truth. Islam is making a steady progress in Europe. Every year large numbers enter within the fold of Islam.

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# G. B. SHAW ON ISLAM

Interviewed by the special representative of the *Light* of Lahore at Bombay while on his recent world tour, in connection with his prophecy in his book *Getting Married* as to the Islamization of Europe, Mr. G. B. Shaw paid the following glowing tribute to the Prophet of Islam and the faith he taught :

I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capability to the changing phase of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. The world must doubtless attach high value to the predictions of great men like me. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of to-morrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of to-day. The Medieval ecclesiastics either through ignorance or bigotry painted Muhammadanism in the darkest colours. They were in fact trained both to hate the man Muhammad and his religion. To them Muhammad was Anti-Christ. I have studied him—the wonderful man—and in my opinion, far from being an Anti-Christ he must be called the Saviour of Humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much-needed peace and happiness. But to proceed: it was in the 19th century that honest thinkers like Carlyle, Goethe and Gibbon perceived intrinsic worth in the religion of Muhammad and thus there was some change for the better in the European attitude towards Islam. But the Europe of the present century is far advanced. It is beginning to be enamoured of the creed of Muhammad. In the next century it may go still further in recognising the utility of that creed in solving its problems and it is in this sense that you must understand my prediction. Already even at the present time many of my own people and of Europe as well have gone over to that faith of Muhammad, and the Islamization of Europe, to use the expression of your own query, may be said to have begun.

# WHERE THE JEWS ARE

According to latest fiugures the Jewish population of the world is approximately 14½ millions, distributed as follows :—

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Poland | ... | 2,829,436 | Syria | ... | 35,000 |
| Russia | .. | 2,626,667 | Arabia | ... | 25,000 |
| Rumania | ... | 834,400 | India | ... | 22,500 |
| Germany | ... | 443,000 | Bokhara | ... | 21,000 |
| Hungary | ... | 473,310 | Afghanistan | ... | 18,000 |
| Czecho-Slovakia | ... | 344,342 | China | ... | 15,000 |
| Great Britain and Ireland | ... | 300,000 | Aden | ... | 4,000 |
| | | | Japan | ... | 500 |
| Austria | ... | 300,000 | Dutch East Indies | ... | 2,000 |
| France | ... | 165,000 | Strait Settlements | ... | 700 |
| Lithuania | ... | 160,000 | Philippines | ... | 600 |
| Holland | ... | 115,229 | Cyprus | ... | 180 |
| Greece | ... | 110,000 | Indo-China | ... | 1,000 |
| Latvia | ... | 105,000 | British South Africa | | 62,103 |
| Turkey | ... | 85,000 | French Morocco | ... | 125,981 |
| Yugo-Slavia | ... | 80,000 | Spanish Morocco | ... | 24,500 |
| Belgium | ... | 60,000 | Tangier | ... | 10,000 |
| Bulgaria | ... | 50,000 | Algeria | ... | 87,000 |
| Italy | ... | 40,000 | Tunis | ... | 65,000 |
| Switzerland | ... | 21,000 | Egypt | ... | 65,000 |
| Sweden | .. | 6,500 | Abyssinia | ... | 60,000 |
| Denmark | ... | 6,000 | Tripoli | ... | 19,000 |
| Esthonia | ... | 4,800 | U. S. A. | ... | 3,800,000 |
| Spain | ... | 4,500 | Argentine | ... | 200,000 |
| Danzig | ... | 9,239 | Canada | ... | 126,196 |
| Portugal | ... | 1,500 | Mexico | ... | 10,000 |
| Finland | ... | 1,618 | Brazil | ... | 27,000 |
| Norway | ... | 1,457 | Cuba | ... | 6,000 |
| Gibraltar | ... | 1,400 | Chile | ... | 4,000 |
| Luxembourg | ... | 1,270 | Dutch Guiana | ... | 1,313 |
| Malta | ... | 50 | Jamaica | ... | 1,250 |
| Russia in Asia | ... | 170,813 | Uruguay | ... | 2,000 |
| Palestine | ... | 130,000 | Australia | ... | 21,622 |
| Iraq | ... | 90,000 | New Zealand | ... | 2,380 |
| Asiatic Turkey | ... | 70,000 | | | |
| Persia | ... | 80,000 | Grand Total | | 14,621,405 |

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# NOTES ON THE HOLY QURAN

واذ قلتم يا موسى لن نصبر على طعام واحد فادع لنا ربك يخرج لنا مما تنبت الارض من بقلها وقثائها وفومها وعدسها وبصلها قال اتستبدلون الذى هو ادنى بالذى هو خير اهبطوا مصرا فان لكم ما سالتم وضربت عليهم الذلة والمسكنة وباءو بغضب من الله ذالك بانهم كانوا يكفرون بآيات الله ويقتلون النبيين بغير الحق ذالك بما عصوا وكانوا يعتدون۔

62. *Wa idh qultum yā Mūsā lan naṣbira 'alā ṭa'āmin-wāhidin fad'u lanā Rabbā-ka yukhrij lanā mimmā tumbitul arḍu mim-baqlihā wa qiththā'i-hā wa fūmi-hā wa 'adasi-hā wa baṣali-hā Qāla a tastabdilūnal-ladhī huwa adnā billadhī huwa khair. Ihbiṭū miṣran fa inna la-kum mā sa'altum; wa ḍuribai 'alai-himudh-dhillatu wal maskanah, wa bā'ū bi-gbahabim-minallāh: Dhālika bi anna-hum kānū yahfurūna bi āyātillāhi wa yaqtulunan-nabiyyina bi ghairil-haqq; dhalika bi-mā 'aṣa-wa kānū ya'tadūn.*

62. And *remember* when you said, ' O Moses, surely, we will not remain content with one kind of food; pray, then, to thy Lord, in our behalf, that He would bring forth for us of what the earth grows, such as its herbs and its cucumbers, and its wheat or garlic and its lentils and its onions.' He said, Do you desire to take that which is worse in exchange for that which is better? Enter some town and there is for you what you ask.' And smitten were they with abasement and destitution, and they incurred the wrath of Allah: that was because they disbelieved the signs of Allah and intended to kill the prophets without just cause ; this was because they had rebelled, and transgressed.

74. (*a*) Another instance is cited to show how they made no effort to turn the favours of God to good account. When they were in the desert, God sent them *manna* and quails. But some time after this, they began to exhibit discontent with one kind of food (both *manna* and the

quails taken together might be considered as *one* kind of food, but we learn from the Bible that the supply of quails was discontinued after a while and the Israelites were living on *manna* alone) and to clamour for all kinds of greens and grains (*vide* numbers XI, 5). As the demand was not based on a right understanding of God's wise ways, and as they had also lost faith in the promises of God, they met with disgrace and drew upon themselves the wrath of God.

God's displeasure with the Israelites was not due to their demand for inferior things. The real cause for God's anger lay elsewhere. Having lived for a long time in bondage, they had become lazy and timid. God wished them to remain in a desert, living on game and wild herbs, and so, by an independent mode of life, to fling off their cowardice and laziness. Thus, re-vitalised and energised, they might be led to the Promised land and made rulers of Palestine. They failed to understand the purpose of God in this isolated and independent mode of life and insisted upon an agricultural life or a life in an habitation where they might be able to eat things grown by man. God pointed out their error, saying that they had asked for a life of agriculture or town life in preference to sovereignty. God wanted to make them rulers, but they wished for husbandry. So God ordered them to go to a town where they would get the desired object.

For this offence of theirs, they deserved punishment, because their request was the outcome of a mistrust in the promise of God. If they had possessed faith in the promise of God, they would not have shown undue hurry, and their lack of faith in the words of God was due to their want of respect for His prophets. And they opposed the prophets because they were evil-doers and sinners. The prophets invited them to guidance and virtue which they disliked, and, as a result, they opposed them. Those who are interested in the law of causation can well appreciate the admirable way in which the Holy Qurān traces the causal

sequence of every evil to its origin and thus strikes at the root of it so as to prevent all possibilities of recurrence.

The words لن نصبر على طعام واحد (we will not remain content with one kind of food) contain a threat. If they had meant to say, ' We are unable to remain content with one kind of food, the verse ought to have read as لا نقدر ان نصبر (*lā naqdiru an-naṣbira*) and not as it stands in the Holy Qurān).

The verse أتستبدلون الذى هو ادنى بالذى هو خير " Do you desire to take that which is worse in exchange for that which is better ? " is an interrogation conveying the contrary meaning (استفهام انكارى). In other words it means, " Do you think that you are abandoning a worse thing and taking instead something better ? You are certainly mistaken in holding such a view."

(*b*) The words يقتلون النبيين *yaqtulunan-nabiyyin* in this verse do not mean that the Israelites ' killed the prophets,' because, up to the day of Moses, no prophet is known to have been slain by them. As a matter of fact ; Moses is the first prophet who was sent to the Israelites as a nation. So Moses, and his coadjutor, Aaron, are the only persons to whom the words can be applied ; but these two prophets were not killed by the Israelites, although they were often opposing them and were sometimes even bent upon killing them. Hence, these words cannot signify that they put the prophets to death, and the only possible solution is that they opposed the prophets and were even prepared to kill them. Arabic dictionaries show that the word قتل *qatl*, besides the primary sense of ' killing,' bears a variety of secondary significances, such as, ' attempting to kill,' ' intending to kill,' or mere ' beating,' or ' cutting off all connections ' or ' trying to undo what another is doing.' Any one of these meanings can be applied to this verse with equal degree of truth. This interpretation is not only based on the Arabic dictionaries, but the Holy Qurān also supports it in a number of verses where the word *qatl* has been evidently used in the sense of ' attempting to kill ' or intending to ' kill ' (*vide*, for in-

stance, III, 21, and XL. 79).

ان الذين آمنوا والذين هادوا والنصارى والصابئين من آمن بالله واليوم الاخر وعمل صالحاً فلهم اجرهم عند ربهم. ولا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون.

63. *Innal-ladhina āmanu walladhina hādu wan-naṣārā waṣ-Ṣābiina man āmana bil-lākhi wal-yaumil ākhir wa 'amila ṣaliḥan fa la-hum ajru-hum 'inda Rabbi-him wa lā khaufun 'alai-him wa la hum yaḥzanun.*

63. Surely, the Believers, and the Jews, and the Christians and the Sabians, whoso believe in Allah and the Last Day and do good deeds, shall have their reward with their Lord, and no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve.

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75. (*a*) ان الذين آمنوا *innal-ladhina āmanu* lit. 'Those who believe' here signifies the people who profess to be believers in Islam *i. e.* those who profess to be Muslims. The verb has been used in this sense elsewhere also in the Holy Qurān ; see, for instance Ch. IV, 137.

من آمن بالله *man āmana billāhi* (whoso believe in Allah). Here the verb *āmana* means '*actually* believe.'

(*b*) صابئين *Sabi'īn* is applied to the followers of two faiths : (1) starworshipping people living in Mesopotamia (Gibbon's Rome, Vol. V. p. 460), (2) another tribe whose faith was a patchwork derived from Judaism, Christianity and Parsiism. The latter lived at the mouth of the Euphrates, (3) according to the critics of the Bible, Sabaeans or Sabians is the name of a tribe of ancient Yemen, *viz.* the people of the Queen of Sheba.

(*c*) It is the characteristic of the Holy Qurān that it gives nothing in the form of a mere story, but every narrative is interspersed with useful words of advice for the spiritual uplifting of the reader ; therefore, after enumerating all the wrong-doings of the Israelites, it goes on to say (in verse 63) that although they have exceeded all bounds in sin, yet God's grace is infinitely great, and adds that if they identify themselves with this new covenant, they and even others, can again enjoy the gracious care of God.

This verse contains a grand prophecy, and points out an easy test for the recognition of the true religion. A divine faith is backed up by divine support and succour, whereas a false one has no share in the sustaining support of God. Resorting to this criterion, God has named certain faiths in this verse and drawn attention to the fact that besides those who profess Islam, there are Jews, Christians and Sabians who each in turn consider themselves as the followers of truth and claim to be doing deeds pleasing to God. In order to determine which of them are true and real believers, God points to the unfailing criterion that those people who truly believe in God and the Day of Judgment and really do good deeds will find deliverance from fear and danger and will enjoy all sorts of comforts and tranquillity of mind. This test was put forward under conditions by no means auguring well for the Muslims. Every student of history knows in what helpless condition the Muslims were when the verse was revealed and made public, *viz.* in the early days of the Hegira. Again, everybody knows how, in a few years, they made rapid strides towards prosperity, and how the poor Muslims, once hemmed in on all sides by enemies, spread over every part of the earth, and again how their fears and dangers were converted into bright hopes and joys, and how their enemies, who previously enjoyed all earthly power and comfort, fell victims to all sorts of fear and grief. Thus, God decided the case in favour of the Muslims and, by His visible favours and blessings, demonstrated to the world that the Muslims were the only people who, in all reality, had faith in God and the Day of Judgment and did good deeds, and that, in striking contrast to Islam, the faith of the non-Muslim population was nominal, and their deeds not pleasing to God.

(*d*) It must be remembered that, in the verse under discussion, God has promised freedom from fears and dangers to those who *actually* believe in God and the Day of Judgment and do good deeds. The Muslims of to-day are, as foretold by the Holy Prophet himself, falling away

from Islam, have ceased to act upon Holy Qur-ān, and are no better than the Israelites of the days of Christ. Their degradation is by way of punishment, in the fulfilment of the prophecy. Of course, a renewal of the same promise is held up to those who would accept the Promised Messiah. This promise will be fulfilled not by earthly means but by spiritual ones, and Islam will gain ascendancy, not at the point of the sword but by means of cogent arguments and convincing reasons. The Promised Messiah has made his appearance and the blessed Millennium has already dawned.

(*e*) It will be wrong to infer from this verse that the Holy Qur-ān holds any people believing in God and the Judgment Day as saved. According to the Holy Qur-ān belief in God and the Judgment Day includes belief in all the fundamentals of Islam. Elsewhere the Holy Qur-ān says: "*As for* those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers, and desire to make a distinction between Allah and His Messengers.....it is these who are veritable disbelievers." (IV, 151.) This verse clearly shows that belief in God includes belief in Prophets, which in turn includes a faith in the books revealed to them. At another place, the Holy Qur-ān says:— "And they that believe in the latter day believe therein (in the Holy Qur-ān) and they strictly observe their prayers." (VI, 94.) This verse tells us that belief in the next life includes belief in the Holy Qur-ān and the performance of devotions. Thus belief in God and the Judgment Day covers all the tenets emanating therefrom. See also note 23*b*.

و إذ اخذنا ميثاقكم ورفعنا فوقكم الطور خذوا ما آتيناكم بقوة واذكروا ما فيه لعلكم تتقون۔ ثم توليتم من بعد ذالک فلولا فضل الله عليكم ورحمته لكنتم من الخاسرين۔

*64. Wa idh akhadhnā mīthaqa-kum wa rafa'nā fauqa-kumut-tūr ; khudhū mā'ātainā-kum bi-quwwatin wadhkurū māfīhi lā'alla kum tattaqūn.*

*65. Thumma tawallaitum mim ba' di dhālika fa lau lā faḍlullāhi 'alaikum wa raḥmatu-hu la-kuntum minal-khāsirīn.*

64. And *remember* when We took a covenant from you and raised Tūr* over you, *saying*, Take fast hold of what We have given you and bear in mind what is therein that you may be saved.

65. Then did you turn back after this; and had it not been for Allah's grace towards you and His mercy. You would surely have been of the losers 78.

76. Reverting to the subject proper, in order to remind the Israelites of all their vices, mention is made of covenant which was taken from them at the foot of Mount Sinai, saying that they had broken the covenant in its entirety.

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ميثاق *Mīthāq* (covenant) here refers to the Ten Commandments which were given to Moses on Mount Sinai.

The words رفعنا فوقكم الطور *Rafa'nā fauqa-kumut-Ṭūr* (We raised Tūr over you) do not mean that Mount Sinai was uplifted over the heads of the Israelites. The verse carries no other import than that the covenant was taken at the time when the Israelites were standing at the foot of the mountain. This meaning is quite consistent with the Arabic idiom. Although the words رفع *raf'* and فوق *fauq* are used respectively in the sense of 'raising' and 'above', yet they also bear the sense of "height," as we read in Bukhari (*Kitāb-ul-Manāqib*): "While we (Abu Bakr and the Holy Prophet, May peace and the blessings of God be upon him!) were on our way to Medina it became hot at noon, then رفع لنا صخرة طويلة لها ظل a long stone was raised high for us," which means that close by, they spied a big stone. In the Holy Qur-ān, we read إذ جاؤكم من فوقكم (احزاب). Literally, the verse means 'They

* Mount Sinai.

came upon you from above you', but actually it signifies 'they made a descent upon you from a higher position'.

The raising of the Mount is figuratively ascribed to God, because God had positively commanded them to stay at the foot of the Mount (*vide* Exodus XIX, 21).

ولقد علمتم الذين اعتدوا منكم فى السبت فقلنا لهم كونوا قردة خاسئين فجعلنا ها نكالا لمابين يديها وما خلفها و موعظة للمتقين۔

*66. Wa la-qad 'alimtumlla dhī-na'tadau min-kum fis-sabti fa qulnā la-hum kunū qirada-tan khāsi'īn.*

*67. Fa ja'alnā-hā nakālalli mā baina yadai-ha wa mā khalfa-hā wa mau'idhatan lil-muttaqīn.*

66. And surely you have known those of you who exceeded bounds in regard to the Sabbath, and We said to them, 'Be ye apes despised' 77.

67. Thus, We made it a warning to those of their day and those who came after them, and a lesson for the God-fearing.

77. In this verse, it is pointed out that the covenant made it binding upon them, among other things, to keep the Sabbath, which was appointed as a sign between God and the Israelites in the Mosaic dispensation, just as circumcision had been appointed as a sign between God and the descendants of Abraham ; but some of them went the length of breaking even such a fundamental part of the covenant, to say nothing of the less important commandments and were, of course, disgraced.

It is wrong to infer from the word قردة *qīradatan* (apes) that the profaners of the Sabbath were actually transformed into apes. This narrative has been related by the Holy Qur-ān at two other places also, which clearly show that those people did not actually turn apes but that the word 'apes' has been used smybolically.

At one place, the Holy Qur-ān says:—"Say, shall I inform you of those whose reward with Allah is worse than that of the *man you hate*? *They* are those whom Allah has cursed and on whom His wrath has descended, and of whom He has made apes and swine and who worshipped the Devil: these are in a worse plight, and most erring from the right way. And when they come to you, they say, 'We believe,' while they came in with disbelief, and went out therewith; and Allah best knows what they conceal" (V: 61, 62.) This verse states with all clearness that the class of men who were under the curse and the wrath of God, who had become apes and swine, and who were the followers of Satan, used to come to the Holy Prophet and often said quite equivocally that they were among the believers, although their hearts were filled with disbelief. This shows that they were not actually transformed into apes, but that their transformation was only in character and spirit.

At another place, the Holy Qur-ān says:—"So when they (the Israelites) turned with disdain from that which they had been forbidden, we said to them, 'Be ye apes despised.' and *remember* when thy Lord proclaimed that He would most surely send against them till the day of resurrection those who would afflict them with grievous torment . . . . And We cut them up into parties in the earth; among them are those that are virtuous, and among them are those that are not so. And we tried them with blessings and evils that perchance they might repent." (VII: 168, 169.) It is clear from the above verses that the 'apes' herein spoken of are not apes in shape, but transgressors have been so called on account of their close resemblance to apes in character and spirit. God says about them that they will continue to be seen till the last day of the world and will continue comprising good as well as evil persons, and that by means of a variety of trials, steps will be taken to bring them over to virtue. Thus, while the Holy Qur-ān speaks of a number of Israelites having changed into 'apes', it itself explains the character of that conversion, and in the

presence of the Quranic explanation, no legend can hold its own.

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Again, it is a general rule of Arabic Grammar that the suffixes ين and ون are added to the plurals of such words as refer to rational beings. In conformity with this rule, God has used, as a participle to qualify قردة *qiradata* (apes) the word خاسئين *khāsi'īn* which has ين in the end, which shows that the word *qiradata* alludes not to any irrational beings but to rational ones who had adopted the character of apes. Had the Holy Qur-ān meant actual conversion into apes, it would have used the form خاسئة *khāsi'ah* and not خاسئين *khāsi'īn*.

The learned men of the past have also held the above-cited view. *Mujāhid* who is considered to be the greatest of the commentators and is among *Tabi'īn* (the immediate successors of Holy Prophet's companions) says: —

مسخت قلوبهم ولم يمسخوا قردة وانما هو مثل ضربه الله لهم۔

"Their hearts were changed; they were not transformed physically. God has used the expression figuratively." (*vide* Ibn-i-Kathir, vol. I, p. 179.) Other eminent aurhorities for this interpretation are *Qatādah, Rabi'*, and *Abu Mālik. Abdul 'Aliyah* holds the same view, interpreting the words قردة خاسئين (apes despised) as اذلة صاغرين *i.e.*, "disgraced and humiliated."

References to the profaning of the Sabbath by the Israelites are to be found in the Bible. See, for instance, Jeremiah, XVII, 19—2, and Rehemiah, XIII, 15—18.

واذ قال موسى لقومه ان الله يامركم ان تذبحوا بقرة۔ قالوا اتتخذنا هزواً قال اعوذ بالله ان اكون من الجاهلين۔

قالوا ادع لنا ربك يبين لنا ماهى قال انه يقول انها بقرة لا فارض ولا بكر عوان بين ذالك فافعلوا ماتؤ مرون۔

قالوا ادع لنا ربك يبين لنا مالونها قال انه يقول انها بقرة صفراء فاقع لونها تسر الناظرين۔

قالوا ادع لنا ربك يبين لنا ماهي ان البقر تشابه علينا وانا ان شاء الله لمهتدون۔

قال انه يقول انها بقرة لاذلول تثيرا لا رض ولا تسقى الحرث۔
مسلمة لا شية فيها قالوا الان جئت با لحق فذبحوها وما كا دوا يفعلون۔

*68. Wa idh qāla Musā li-qaumi-hī, in nallāha ya 'muru-kum an tadhbahu baqarah; qālu-atattakhidhunā huzuwā; qāla a'udhu billāhi an akuna minal-jāhilīn.*

*69. Qāluḍ'u lanā Rabba-ka yubaiyyil-lanā ma hiya; qāla, innahu yaqulu, inna-hā baqarat-ul-lā fāriḍun-wa lā bikr 'awānun baina dhālik, faf' alu mā tu'marun.*

*70. Qāluḍ'u lanā Rabba-ka yubaiyyil-lana ma launuhā; qala inna-hu yaqulu inna-ha baqaratun ṣafra'u, faqi'ul launu-ha tasurrun-naẓirīn.*

*71. Qaluḍ'u lana Rabba-ka yubaiyyil-lana ma hiya innal-baqara tashabaha 'alaina wa īnna in sha-'Allahu, la muhtadun.*

*72. Qala innahu yaqulu, innaha baqara-tul-la dhalulun tuthirul-arḍa walatasqil-hartha, musal-lama-tul-la shiyata fī-ha qalul-'ana ji' ta bil-haqq fadhabaḥuha wa ma kadu. yaf'alun.*

68. And *remember* when Moses said to his people, Allah commands you to slaughter a cow. They said 'Dost thou make a jest of us?' He said, 'I seek refuge with Allah from being one of the ignorant.'

69. They said, 'Pray to thy Lord in our behalf that he make plain what she is like.' He answered, 'Allah says, it is a cow, neither old nor young, of a middle age between the two; do ye then what you are commanded.'

70. They said 'Pray to thy Lord in our behalf that He make plain to us what her colour is.' He answered, 'He says, she is a dun cow, intensely dun, delighting the beholders.'

71. They said, 'Pray to thy Lord in our behalf that He make plain to us what sort of cow it is, for cows appear to

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us alike; and if Allah please, we shall assuredly be guided.'

72. He answered: 'He says, it is a cow not broken in to plough the earth or water the tilth, a sound one, with no spot on her'. They said, 'Now hast thou brought the truth.' Then they slaughtered her, though they had all but left it undone.

78. After drawing the attention of the Israelites to the cases in which they had broken the commandments of God, He mentions one incident in which they had been guilty of disobedience. Thus God reminds them that although they had been repeatedly guilty of transgression, yet when they performed a single act of virtue, God made them reap the good fruit of it, in spite of their long record of disobedience and rebelliousness.

God here speaks of a commandment of His to the Israelites to slaughter a cow. The reason for this commandment is not far to seek. The Israelites had lived for a long time in Egypt, and Pharaohs had a great veneration for the cow. Thus, an infatuated reverence for the cow had also crept into the minds of the Israelites, and as verse 52 of this Chapter and Exodus XXXII show, when they made an object of worship for themselves, they made it in the shape of a cow. It was, therefore, imperatively essential that the Law of Moses should have provided means for stamping out from the Israelites the evil practice of deifying the cow. For this purpose, the Mosaic Law several times repeated the injunction for the sacrifice of the cow. See for instance Numbers, XIX, 1—9; Leviticus IV, 12, 21; XVI, 27, etc. For, a nation which continues slaughtering an animal can never think of deifying it.

In the verses under comment, mention is made of Moses having ordered the Israelites to sacrifice a cow. At first, they were bidden to sacrifice an ordinary cow, but it appears that there was a particular cow which they held in special reverence and they thought that the order pertained to that cow. So they repeatedly asked Moses to specify the cow which God meant to be slaughtered. Hence in

response to their questioning, some conditions were added to specify the cow. At last when the description given by Moses corresponded to the cow which they had in view, they said, "Now hast thou brought the truth." These words of theirs show that they had in their mind some particular cow, to which they thought the command pertained. At last when the conditions added by Moses under divine inspiration specified the cow, they slaughtered her. Thus they were guided aright as a result of their obedience to Moses.

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This incident finds mention in the Bible also (*vide* Numbers XIX, 1—9). The Quranic version, however, differs slightly from the Biblical. According to the Holy Qur-ān, the Israelites were at first ordered to slaughter an ordinary cow, and it was only on their repeated questionings that conditions were added to specify it. On the other hand, the Biblical version makes no mention of this questioning, but tells us that at the very outset the Israelites were ordered to slaughter a cow answering a particular description. Again, the narrative of the Holy Qur-ān shows that it was with great reluctance that the Israelites complied with the command, but the Bible fails to throw any light on the manner in which the divine behest was executed. It is not difficult to see which side the truth lies. It is too much to believe that the Israelites who were often prepared to fight with Moses on receipt of an injunction against their wishes, carried out without question the stringent orders to slaughter a cow.

## RUKŪ 9.

وإذ قتلتم نفسا فادّرء تم فيها والله مخرج ما كنتم تكتمون۔ فقلنا اضربوه
ببعضها كذالك يحي الله الموتى ويريكم آياته لعلكم تعقلون۔

*73. Wa idh qatal-tum nafsan, faddāra' tum fī-hā; wallāhu mukhrijum-mā kuntum taktumūn.*

*74. Fa-qul-naḍribūhu bi-ba' ḍi-hā; kadhālika yuḥ-yillā hul-mauta wa yurī-kum āyātihī la'alla-kum ta'qilūn.*

73. And *remember* when you almost killed a person and differed among yourselves about it; and Allah could bring to light what you concealed.

74. Then, we said, 'Smite it for a part of its *sin*.' Thus, Allah gives life to the dead and shows you His signs that you may understand.

79. God has related in detail the misdeeds of the Israelites and their acts of transgression in order to bring home to them the fact that in the face of such conduct on their part it was idle to expect that prophets should be raised from among them, and that by repeatedly breaking the solemn vow they had rendered themselves unworthy of the favours promised to the sons of Isaac through Abraham." As the Jews could advance the pretext that the deeds related were done by their ancestors and not by them and that everybody was responsible for his own actions, so it was necessary to enumerate those evils too which the Jews of the Holy Prophet's time were accustomed to do.

The Holy Qur-ān has not named the person slain, but read in the light of the history of the time when this verse was revealed, the verse appears to apply to the murder of a companion of the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him!) by the Jews at Medina. Following are the details of the event.

The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him!), on his arrival at Medina entered into a treaty with the Jews. But the growing prosperity and success of Islam roused the jealousy of the Jewish leaders and some of them began to incite their people against the Muslims. The result of this incitement was that the Jews were emboldened and assumed an insolent attitude towards the Muslims. Some time after the battle of Badr, a Muslim lady went to a Jew's shop to make some purchases.

The shopkeeper and the other Jews sitting at the shop behaved very insultingly and insolently toward her, and the

shopkeeper himself played such a trick upon her that when she, being unable to bear their insults, rose to depart, she became naked at which the shopkeeper and the other Jews burst out laughing. This made the helpless lady cry for help. A Muslim happened to be near. Hearing her cry, he rushed to the place and in the fight that ensued, the shopkeeper was killed. Thereupon, the Jews took the law in their own hands, and instead of referring the matter to the Holy Prophet for decision, in accordance with the terms of the treaty, they themselves murdered the Muslim. This happened towards the close of the second year of the Hegira. With reference to this murder, the Holy Qur-ān says, "And *remember* when you killed a person and differed among yourselves about it." The Jews differed among themselves about the murder, for none of them admitted that he had committed the murder.

But the real murderers were not the Jews who had collected at the Jew's shop. The real murderer was their ring-leader who had taken a leading part in inciting the Jews and kindling their hatred against the Muslims. His name was Ka'b bin Ashraf. He was looked upon as their leader by the Jews of the whole of Arabia. He was a rich man and an eminent poet. He was a party to the treaty which was concluded between the Jews and the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him!) on the arrival of the latter in Medina. Inwardly, however, he harboured deep hatred against Islam and its holy Founder. In the beginning, he thought that the small Muslim community would soon be scattered and Islam would come to a speedy end. But when the Muslims won a decisive victory at Badr, he realized that Islam was taking a deep root in the soil and in order to eradicate it it was imperative that strenuous efforts should be made. So he at once started for Mecca and there with the aid of his powerful eloquence and stirring verses set ablaze the fire of enmity and hatred that was smouldering in the hearts of the Quraish, and with the edges of the sacred curtain of Ka'ba

in their hands, he made them take the solemn oath that they would know no rest until they had destroyed Islam and its Holy Founder from the face of the earth. Thereafter he toured among other tribes of Arabia and stirred them up against the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him !) and the small body of his followers. Having lighted up the fire of hatred and enmity throughout Arabia, he returned to Medina and began to create mischief by making poems in which mention was made of Muslim women, and the ladies nearly related to the Holy Prophet, in the most offensive and insulting language. These verses were widey published and were publicly recited by those who were inwardly hostile to Islam. The result of these tactics was that feelings of hatred were excited in the minds of the Jews who assumed an openly hostile and insolent attitude to the Holy Prophet and his Holy Companions, throwing to the winds their treaty obligations. It was this insolence of the Jews which emboldened them to commit such murders as the one referred to above, in open defiance of the terms of the treaty they had so solemnly concluded with the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him). Hence, the real culprit who was responsible for the assassination of the holy companion was no other than Ka'b bin Ashraf, the wicked Jewish leader who had instigated the Jews to rebellion and breach of faith. He even laid a plot against the life of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him !). His guilt was an established fact. He was guilty of high treason against the state. So he was put to death by the Holy Prophet's command, in the month of *Jamādi-ul-Ukhra*, in the third year of Hegira. It is to this sentence of death that the Holy Qur-ān refers when it says in the verse under comment :—

" Then We said, ' Smite him (the real murderer) for a part of the sin.' "

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# The Ahmadiyya Movement

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